

HOUSEKEEPING FOR TWO

By ANNA B. HAMMAN

(Continued from p. 986, Vol. viii.)

As a change from the various wheat and oat preparations which are oftenest used for breakfast cereals, granulated hominy is occasionally good. This should be prepared the night before and reheated for breakfast, as it needs thorough cooking.

Granulated Hominy.—One cup boiling water, one-fourth teaspoon salt, one-fourth cup hominy. Add salt to water and stir in hominy. Cook at the boiling point, stirring enough to prevent sticking, until it thickens. Then cook over hot water an hour.

Creamed Dried Beef.—For those who are not quite satisfied with cereal and fruit for breakfast and who yet are not equal to consuming steak or chops in the morning, a dish of creamed meat or fish will give the needed heartiness to the meal. The best grade of dried beef is moist, tender and not oversalt, and does not need freshening. But if the beef is at all hard or too salt, it should be freshened by pouring over it boiling water and allowing it to stand ten minutes. Tear the slices in small pieces, making half a cupful. Put in a saucepan two tablespoons of butter, melt, add two tablespoons of flour, and cook until blended. Add the beef and one cup of milk. Cook, stirring constantly, until the milk reaches the boiling point. This cooks the beef sufficiently, without hardening it, as cooking at the boiling point does.

Apple Sauce.—This is particularly good served for breakfast with the dried beef. Cut into quarters or eighths three or four tart, juicy apples, pare and take out the cores. Rinse the pieces quickly in cold water and put them into a saucepan with a very little water to prevent scorching until the apples begin to cook. Cook until perfectly tender. Sweeten to taste a few minutes before taking from the fire. Beat until smooth or put through a sieve. Apple snow, which makes a good luncheon dessert, is made by adding the stiffly beaten white of an egg to apple sauce made a trifle sweeter than usual.

Cream of Tomato Soup.—Cool, fall days make a hearty cream soup acceptable for luncheon or supper. For the tomato soup, use one cup of tomatoes measured after cooking and straining, one cup milk, one and one-half tablespoons butter, one tablespoon flour, one-half teaspoon salt, one-eighth teaspoon pepper, one slice onion. Either fresh or canned

tomatoes may be used, and they should be cooked gently until the pulp is soft enough to pass easily through a sieve, leaving only the seeds behind. Scald the milk with the onion. Melt the butter, add the flour and cook together three minutes without browning. Add tomato juice and seasoning, bring to boiling point, stirring constantly. Add tomato mixture gradually to scalded milk. Care should be taken to keep the soup well below the boiling point after putting tomatoes and milk together. One-sixteenth teaspoon of baking soda may be put into the tomatoes just before adding them to the milk, to prevent curdling. But with care a smooth soup can be made without the soda, and it has a rather better flavor than one in which soda is used.

Crutons.—Cut two slices of stale bread one-half inch thick. Spread very lightly with soft butter. Cut into half-inch cubes, put on a pie tin and place in a slow oven. Shake frequently, and bake until a delicate brown on all sides. Serve with the cream of tomato soup.

Baked Fish.—Get any seasonable fish not too large to be consumed by two people. Be sure that it is fresh. These are the marks of fresh fish: firm flesh, bright, bulging eyes, bright scales, gills a good red, and, of course, a fresh smell. The fish will be scaled and the entrails removed at the market, and the head taken off if you wish. The fish should be wiped thoroughly inside and out with a damp cloth. Any remaining scales and any clots of blood along the backbone should be removed. Season the fish plentifully inside and out with salt and pepper. Prepare a stuffing as follows: Mix one-half cup cracker crumbs, one-half cup stale bread crumbs, four tablespoons melted butter, one-fourth teaspoon salt, one-eighth teaspoon pepper, few drops of onion juice, one teaspoon chopped parsley, one-fourth cup hot water. Put in the stuffing and sew up the fish with a darning needle and stout darning cotton or soft cord. Lay some strips of fat salt pork or a sheet of tough greased paper in the bottom of the baking pan, so that the fish will not stick. Bake in a moderate oven until the flesh is tender enough to leave the backbone easily when tried with a fork.

Parsley Butter.—This is a good sauce with baked fish. One tablespoon butter, one teaspoon finely minced parsley, one teaspoon lemon juice, few grains of pepper. Rub the butter to a cream, add salt, pepper, parsley, then beat in lemon juice gradually.

Mashed Potatoes.—Scrub, pare and rinse the potatoes. Put them into plenty of boiling water and boil gently until tender. Add salt about ten minutes before they are done. Drain and dry them thoroughly. Mash them, preferably in the hot kettle in which they were cooked, with a fork or wire potato masher until free from lumps; add salt, pepper, butter and hot milk or cream. Beat until perfectly light, and do not

mash down afterwards. To two medium-sized potatoes add a tablespoon of butter and enough milk to moisten, but not to make them wet.

Creamed Cauliflower.—This aristocratic relative of the cabbage is easily prepared, but it is also, like its humble kinsman, easily ruined by poor cooking. Select a small crisp white cauliflower, free from blemishes. Take off the green leaves, and cut the stalk close to the head. Break, not cut, the head into the large clusters into which it naturally divides. Throw them into a bowl of cold water and let them stand an hour if convenient, so that any insects which may have lodged among the flower buds will come out. Drain, put into plenty of boiling water, and boil, *uncovered*, until tender, adding salt about five minutes before it is done. It will cook in twenty to thirty minutes. The common mistake made in cooking cauliflower is to cook it too long and in a covered kettle. This is likely to discolor it and also make it indigestible.

The cauliflower may be served with a seasoning of salt, pepper and butter, with a drawn butter sauce, or with a white sauce.

White Sauce.—One tablespoon butter, one tablespoon flour, one-half cup milk, one-eighth teaspoon salt, few grains of white pepper. Melt butter, add flour and cook three minutes; add milk and seasonings, and stir until mixture boils. This white sauce will answer for creamed vegetables of all kinds and for creamed meat and fish. A little cream in place of a part of the milk is always an improvement. The sauce may be varied in consistency by changing the amount of flour used. Practically all sauces and gravies are made in the same way, substituting various liquids for the milk, as, for instance, tomato juice in making tomato sauce.

Baked Chocolate Pudding.—On the menu board of a certain school lunch room there appeared one day "chocolate bread pudding." The remarks of the students as they discovered it were not complimentary, and the despised bread pudding was left on the hands of the lunch room manager. The next time, made wise by experience, she put on the board "baked chocolate pudding," and every pudding vanished. It is worth trying some day when you have a few pieces of stale bread on hand.

One-half cup stale bread crumbs, one cup scalded milk, one-half square chocolate, two and one-half tablespoons sugar, few grains of salt, one-fourth teaspoon vanilla, two tablespoons slightly beaten egg. Soak the bread crumbs in the milk one-half hour. Melt chocolate over hot water, add sugar and a little milk from the crumbs. Stir this into the bread and milk, add salt, vanilla and beaten egg. Turn into buttered pudding dish or into custard cups and bake in a moderate oven until firm. Serve with a hard sauce made from one tablespoon of butter and three tablespoons of sugar. Rub the butter to a cream, add the sugar gradually, and flavor with a few drops of vanilla.